

The AMERICAN OBSERVER

A free, virtuous and enlightened people must know well the great principles and causes on which their happiness depends. — James Madison



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APRIL 15, 1935

New Food and Drug Law Being Debated

Bill Before Congress to Establish More Effective Control Over Foods, Drugs, Cosmetics

TO CURB FALSE ADVERTISING

But Opposition and Legislative Jam May Prevent Its Passage

Congress has again under consideration a bill designed to make drug stores safe for the United States—and not only drug stores but grocery stores, newspapers, magazines, radio stations, and all other establishments having anything to do with the dispensing of foods, drugs, cosmetics, and mechanical health devices to the people. This bill, which is sponsored by Senator Royal S. Copeland of New York, would give the nation a new Food and Drug Act and would make it possible for the Department of Agriculture to prevent dishonest advertising and to enforce higher standards of purity on foods, drugs, and cosmetics sold in this country.

The Old Law

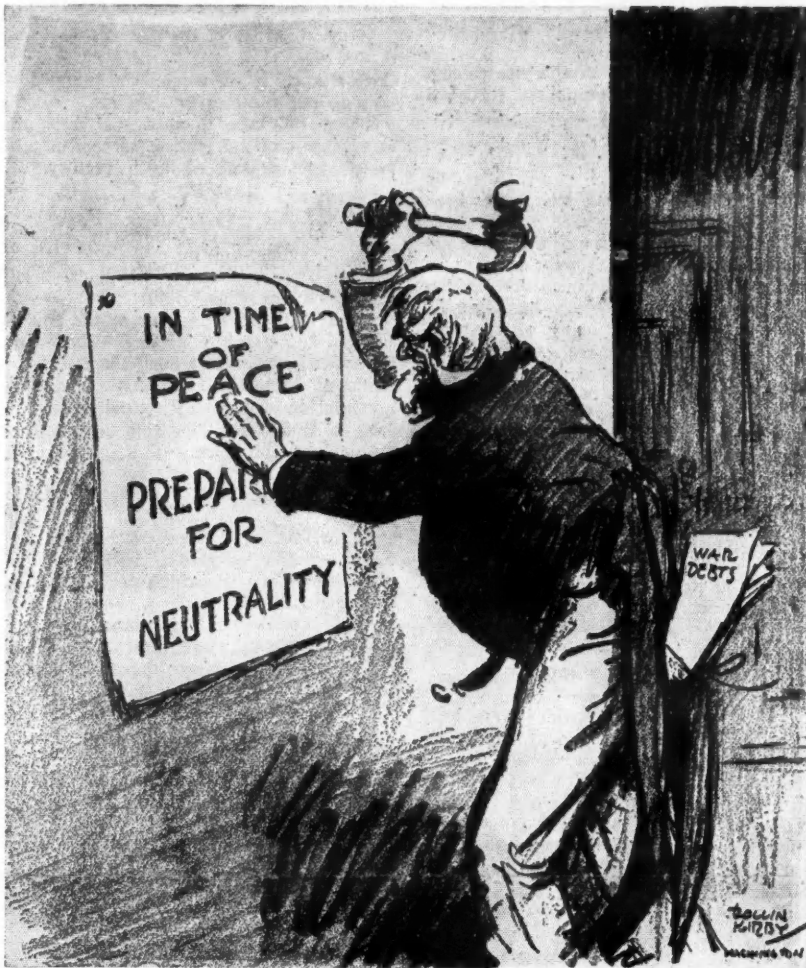
Hardly anyone denies that new legislation is needed. The Food and Drug Act now in existence was enacted by Congress in 1906 when Theodore Roosevelt was President. It is looked upon as one of the important achievements of his administration because it was the first real attempt to check the injury resulting from the use of prepared drugs and it set up safeguards against the sale of spoiled foods. It specifically prohibits manufacturers of drugs from placing labels or brands on their products making all kinds of exaggerated and untrue claims.

But while the prevention of false labeling has been helpful in curbing the distribution of quack and often harmful medicines it has not by any means done away with all evils. The 1906 law made no provisions to cope with dishonest advertising, nor did it give the Department of Agriculture any authority over cosmetics and over mechanical "health aids" such as weight reducers, body stretchers, snore eliminators, and so forth.

Great injury to the user may be caused by the application of drugs and cosmetics sold over the drug store counter and widely advertised in newspapers, magazines, and by radio stations. Undersecretary of Agriculture Tugwell, who has done much work on behalf of the new Copeland bill, claims that "believing some of the advertising they hear by radio and read in publications, people today are using dangerous fat-reducers and are thereby impairing their health; . . . they are using 'safe' hair dyes only to get lead poisoning for their trouble and money; they are taking radium water and are breathing their last; . . . they are trying to treat stomach ulcers with worthless tablets; . . . they are stuffing themselves with worthless nostrums and if, in spite of the nostrum, they get well, they sit down and write testimonials for the manufacturers."

Of course, it must be emphasized that the manufacturers of harmful drugs, cosmetics, and mechanical devices constitute only a minority of the total trade in those products. Most manufacturers do not

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NAILING IT UP

—Kipby in N. Y. WORLD-TELEGRAM

What We Live For

What, after all, do we live for? What can we hope to accomplish? Of all things we might try to do, what is most worth while? Everyone who is at all thoughtful must turn these questions over in his mind from time to time. And they are not easily answered. It is hard, or it seems hard, to do work which really counts, which certainly endures. If we strive too hard and too selfishly for happiness we are likely to miss it. If we aim at wealth we may be disappointed, or if we succeed in the quest it may turn out to be less satisfying than we had thought. If we set out to reform the world we are likely to find our efforts unappreciated by many of those whom we had hoped to assist. What, then, are we to do about it?

Charles Edward Russell has written a book about people who gave their lives to make the world better. They may have been mistaken, but they worked, according to their lights, to improve the conditions of human life. They were reformers. And they met with little but disappointment. The world appeared to be against them. They seemed to be hammering away, hopelessly, at unyielding barriers. That is why Mr. Russell called his book, "Bare Hands and Stone Walls." It is a history of reformers and reform movements with which he has been familiar during his long and busy life. Nearly all these movements are now listed among the lost causes. But Mr. Russell feels, nevertheless, that the effort to make human society better, though never completely successful, is the best and most hopeful of all the undertakings which are open to men and women. He closes his book with these thoughtful observations:

"To make money is nothing; most of the money makers I have known were among the dullest of all God's creatures and led lives flatter than a stove-lid. To get office or position or distinction is nothing; of the men that fifty years ago had all the limelight and the shouting, hardly one still clings by so much as a shred to the human memory. To crowd and elbow to the summit of a profession is nothing; who remembers now the leading lawyers, physicians, engineers, of fifty years ago? Even to write literature is nothing; the literary idols of one generation are the jest of the next and the pavement dust of the next. Well, then, what is there of a rational object of life as one ricochets from bump to bump through this wild world beneath the sun? Why, looking at the matter judicially and coldly, as a reporter and so only, the one purpose that seems to offer a perdurable profit is to keep some step, however stumbling, however far in the rear, with the vast, silent, often mysterious, sometimes hardly discernible processes that are slowly and surely transforming the world from a wolves' den to a place where man can know some peace, some content, some joy of living, some sense of the inexhaustible beauties of the universe in which he has been placed."

Change in Neutrality Policy Is Advocated

Steps to Insure Against Recurrence of Experiences in Last War Are Considered

U. S. TRADE WOULD BE AFFECTED

Government Would Not Seek to Protect American Commerce as It Did in 1914

Officials of the American government are devoting a great deal of attention these days to the study of plans by which this country might be kept out of future wars. With the European situation going from bad to worse, the prospect of maintaining peace indefinitely is generally regarded as extremely slim. What America should do in the case of war is, therefore, a real problem, certainly one of the most important confronting the people today. At the very moment, both houses of Congress are debating measures designed to take the profits out of war (see THE AMERICAN OBSERVER, April 1, 1935). It is expected that if some effective means of curbing profits can be adopted, this country will be much less likely to be drawn into a future war than would otherwise be the case.

Neutrality Policy

Taking the profits out of war is not, however, the only measure which the United States government is now considering. Before the present session of Congress has ended another measure is likely to play an extremely important role in public and private discussions. This is a measure which would define clearly just what position the United States would take in case a war should break out in the future. Like the war profits curb proposal, it is largely the work of the Nye Munitions Committee investigation, but demands for action along this line have come from a number of other sources. The President himself indicated late last year that certain of our policies in time of war should be changed, and the Department of State was instructed to study the problem and make recommendations for changes. At the same time, officials of the army and navy have been making studies of their own. So the whole question is very much in the foreground of Washington discussions at the present time.

All this has to do with the question of neutrality, neutral rights, and neutral responsibilities. Many times in the past, the United States has been involved in serious difficulties with nations which were at war because of our neutrality policy. We have, as a matter of fact, been drawn into at least two major wars on account of our attempts to carry out this policy. Because England refused to respect what we considered our neutral rights in her war with France more than a hundred years ago, we fought the War of 1812. The same thing happened two decades ago, when Germany brazenly flouted these so-called neutral rights. There is little wonder, therefore, that our whole policy of neutrality should be reexamined at a time when the world situation is charged with such explosive possibilities.

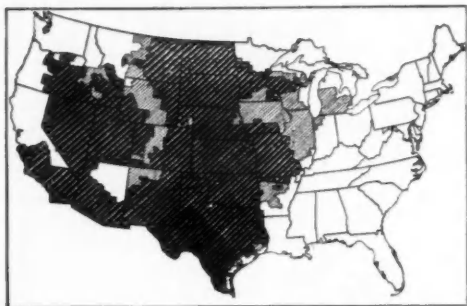
Before coming to the concrete proposals which are being discussed at present, we

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A FEW weeks ago we pointed out that the recent dust storms and the dry spell in the West were causing agriculture officials grave concern. To add to the seriousness of the situation, the United States Weather Bureau now predicts another drought for the coming summer. There has not been enough rain in the Middle West, say Weather Bureau officials, to provide the soil with the moisture it needs to withstand the summer heat and dry spells.

We seem to be passing through a series of dry years. Last summer, it will be remembered, the nation was visited by severe drought, as is shown on the map on this page. Thousands of head of cattle died for lack of food and water, and other thousands were bought up by the government to be slaughtered and canned for relief purposes. The results of last summer's catastrophe are clearly reflected in the high food prices which prevail today. The De-



LAST SUMMER'S DROUGHT

The blackest areas show where the drought was most severe.

partment of Agriculture estimates that the housewife must spend \$1.11 today to get as much food as she could get for \$1 last July.

The administration is well aware of the danger of continued drought, and is planning ways to combat the menace. President Roosevelt hopes to increase greatly the government's tree-planting program as one means of checking wind and holding moisture in the soil. A great shelter-belt of forest is planned to block future droughts and dust storms.

Hard Tasks Ahead

President Roosevelt's short holiday is over. After a restful fishing trip to Florida, he returned to Washington last week to face two of the hardest tasks of his administration. The first is directing the spending of the huge \$4,880,000,000 work-relief fund turned over to him by Congress. This is the largest appropriation ever made in American history, and Congress has granted the President's request to allow him a free hand in its distribution. While Roosevelt will be boss of this undertaking, it is known that he expects to turn over most of the work to Harry L. Hopkins, federal emergency relief administrator, and Rexford G. Tugwell, undersecretary of agriculture.

The second task will probably be even more difficult. This is to get Congress to take action on the laws the President wishes passed without delay. Congress has been in session well over three months and the work-relief bill is the only important measure it has passed. There still remain the social security bill, the utilities bill, new NRA legislation, the banking bill, the Wagner Labor Relations bill, a new pure food and drugs law, ship subsidy and railroad legislation, and changes to be made in the Agricultural Adjustment Act.

All these are highly controversial measures, and Congress is already showing signs of weariness. If Congress is allowed to adjourn before clearing up a good part of this legislation, the New Deal will unquestionably be greatly ham-

pered. Administration defenders say that attempts to adjourn come from the opposition party and are being encouraged by conservative Democrats. The latter, they say, are afraid to voice their opposition to the New Deal and look upon an early adjournment as an easy way out.

Famous Publisher Dies

Adolph S. Ochs, one of the greatest figures in the world of journalism, died last week. Mr. Ochs was publisher of the New York Times, which is generally conceded to be the foremost newspaper in the United States. He has done much to mold public opinion, and his influence has always been considered a powerful force in American life. His importance in the affairs of the nation is reflected in the tributes which have been paid to him by the country's leaders. Governor Lehman, Mayor La Guardia, Senator Wagner, and many of the cabinet officers have expressed profound regret at the great loss American journalism has suffered in the death of Mr. Ochs. Perhaps the greatest contribution which Mr. Ochs has made to newspaper progress is the complete separation between editorial opinion and news reporting. This is the great characteristic of the Times, which has often opposed in its editorial page views which were given a great amount of space in its news columns.

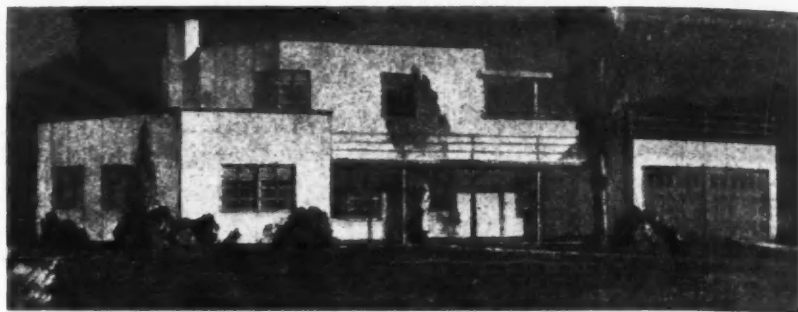
Local Elections

Last week elections were held for local offices in a number of cities throughout the country. The results were so contradictory, as far as political parties are concerned, that it is impossible to discover any general trends.

In Wisconsin the Progressives gained ground, giving the La Follette brothers encouragement in their belief that a strong third party may go far in the presidential elections next year. At the same time the Republicans wrested control of Detroit from Democratic hands and were generally successful in other parts of Michigan. Senator Vandenberg of that state interprets the election as an indication that the Republicans are reviving and will have a good chance in 1936. From another quarter the booming voice of the Democrats is heard. In Chicago their candidate for mayor, Edward J. Kelly, was elected by the largest vote ever given a mayoralty candidate in that city. This victory cheers the national administration, which considers Kelly's success a sign that the country's enthusiasm for Democrats has not subsided. All in all, the political winds are blowing, but nobody seems to know in just what direction.

Mail-Order Houses

The day may not be far off when we will be picking our houses from catalogs. All you will have to do is select a model which appeals to you and write to the makers to send you "House Number So-and-So," as shown on page 49 of your catalog. A few days later a truck will arrive on the site you have picked out, the driver will leap down, hire two or



—Courtesy American Houses, Inc.

THE HOUSE OF THE FUTURE?

A model of one of the new pre-fabricated houses which are attracting wide attention.

three workers in the neighborhood and proceed to put together your house.

These fabricated houses, as they are called, are made of panels of cement and asbestos manufactured in a factory, all ready to be put together. They are modernistic in style and contain every possible convenience, such as an electric kitchen, air-conditioning, built-in radio, and electric clock. They are sturdy buildings, being capable of resisting a hurricane blowing down at 120 miles an hour or the weight of snow to a depth of 25 feet. The panels are bolted on steel frames, the floors are made of compressed fireproof hardwood, and the air-conditioning system is guaranteed to maintain the same temperature throughout the year. The lowest price pre-fabricated house sells for as little as \$3,800 in cash, or \$38 a month for 15 years.

If the fabricated house catches the public imagination, it may be destined to outstrip automobile manufacturing in the list of great national industries. On the other hand, it would greatly increase unemployment among carpenters, masons, plumbers, and plasterers, who would not be needed to work on ready-made houses.

Farley May Go

It is rumored that the next resignation from President Roosevelt's cabinet will take place soon after Congress adjourns. The resigning member is Postmaster General James A. Farley. Mr. Farley has been severely criticized for remaining in the cabinet while at the same time retaining the offices of chairman of the Democratic National Committee and chairman of the Democratic State Committee for New York. It is not these criticisms, however, which may induce Farley to resign, but rather the desire of the President to have all Farley's energies devoted to the conduct of his campaign for reelection in 1936.

Farley has been the target for bitter attacks in the Senate by Huey Long, and some political observers believe that his presence in the cabinet is becoming embarrassing to the administration. They say that his resignation is desirable from a political standpoint and that it is likely to be forthcoming.

Farm to City

For a number of years, before the depression, people in the United States were constantly moving from the country to the city. Young people, especially, were unwilling to remain on the farm and went off to the cities in search of work. But hard times brought a change in this state of affairs. The Department of Agriculture has recently completed a census, or count, of the nation's agricultural population. All the returns have not yet been made public, but it has been learned that there are 500,000 more farms in 1935 than there were in 1930 when the last regular census was taken. Many families, unable to find work, have gone back to live in the country.



U. S. & U.
JAMES A.
FARLEY



TO FLY THE PACIFIC

The new Pan-American clipper which is being groomed to make a test flight on the projected transpacific air route.

THOUGHTS AND SMILES

"What is the best way to serve tripe?" asks a lady reader. Many people find it profitable to dish it up as novels. —PUNCH

A crisis never seems to get tired of impending. —Indianapolis News

News dispatch which says Iowa switchman found a \$1,000 bill doesn't explain how he knew what it was. —Philadelphia Evening Bulletin

He serves his party best who serves the country best. —Rutherford B. Hayes

Now that Prince Mdivani is about to lose his bride, the Woolworth heiress, all that remains to comfort him is the memory of dimes they spent together. —Yakima (Wash.) Herald

If nature is so wise, why did she supply man with so many things to think about and with so little to think with? —Washington Post

Beware the fury of a patient man. —John Dryden

The Bureau of Standards' report that the number of green stop-light lenses made in this country is 25,000 less than the number of red ones will serve to confirm suspicions a lot of us have had for quite a while. —Boston Transcript

Housewives dislike corners. How they must envy the lighthouse keeper's wife! —Tid-Bits

Is life worth living? Yes, so long As there is wrong to right. —Alfred Austin

The Kentucky dog is to have his day. An assistant attorney general there has ruled that labels on all canned canine food in the future must be accurate. —Nashville (Tenn.) Banner

Pull of the moon shifts America as much as 63 feet away from Europe in a year. That would be fine except it takes us closer to Japan. —Wichita (Kans.) Eagle

The brave man carves out his fortune, and every man is the son of his own works. —Miguel de Cervantes

"It isn't wrong," says a writer, "for a man to take a girl out and not spend money on her." But it's very, very difficult. —PUNCH

It's parents who talk baby talk, says a Chicago doctor. The babies simply do so to humor the old folks. —Seattle Star

Unless the conflict of society can be fought out by free criticism, free ballot, and change of the Constitution, democracy dies. —Raymond Gram Swing

The illiterate in some states are being taught to sign their names. Now if somebody would do that for the educated! —Detroit Free Press

Sometimes the back-seat driver has a husband who manages the kitchen from a chair at the dining-room table. —San Francisco Chronicle

Judging from his recent antics, Old Man River must have heard of the Townsend plan. —Yakima (Wash.) Herald

Much more would be done if people believed less was impossible. —Malesherbes

"If you'll work hard 16 hours a day the future won't worry you," some old-timer asserts. Maybe not, but the present would worry us terribly. —Washington Post

AROUND THE WORLD

Danzig: On April 7, the Free City of Danzig provided Hitler with the most serious setback he has had for many a month. In the Danzig municipal elections the Nazis polled less than 60 per cent of the total votes cast, well below the two-thirds majority they had confidently expected.

Danzig originally belonged to the German Empire, but after the war the Allied Powers made it an independent self-governing city, so that the new state of Po-

this issue goes to press on the eve of the conference, it is impossible to report any of its results, but it may be well to sketch the points of view of the three participating powers.

Mussolini, who has gone to all sorts of trouble to polish up and prepare Stresa for his visitors, is pessimistic over the prospect. He himself is all in favor of a strong policy toward Germany. He wants the former Allies to demand that Germany suspend her rearmament plans, guarantee Austrian independence, and return to the League of Nations. If she refuses to meet these terms, Mussolini proposes that all Europe unite to resist German aggression. If possible, he would like a "mutual assistance pact," which is just a polite name for a defensive alliance.

Pierre Laval, French foreign minister, agrees with Mussolini, but he is keeping one eye open to see what England does. France is still undecided whether to throw in her lot with Italy, knowing that Soviet Russia would join them, or whether to cling to Great Britain, upon whose friendship she has so long relied for her security.

Great Britain, as usual, has the most delicate task of all. Her detached position, and her diplomats' exploratory trips to various European capitals (at the moment of writing it seems probable that her exploring ambassador, Captain Anthony Eden, will be too ill to go to Stresa) has enabled her to see the whole situation with understanding and sympathy. She is undoubtedly opposed to Hitler's policies, and she is beginning to think that Mussolini's is the only practicable solution. Nevertheless, a small but influential group of Britons, notably the editors of the *London Times*, are inclined to take Hitler at his word and to urge that his peace suggestions may be worth considering. Sir John Simon has promised to bring Hitler's plan, which includes a 10-year nonaggression pact, before the conference. However, the British government's chief objective will be to make another and final effort at reaching a compromise solution. It has worked out a comprehensive plan of collective security in which Germany and all the rest of Europe may be asked to participate. The plan's fate depends upon the attitude of Italy and France toward it at Stresa.

Switzerland: Ever since the days of the Italian patriot Mazzini, Switzerland has been known as a haven of refuge for political exiles. In the last year or two it has been a convenient retreat for many anti-Nazis who have found Germany too hot for them. One of these, a journalist named Berthold Jacob, was kidnapped by Nazis some months ago and was taken back to Germany for trial. He was accused of predicting German rearmament, a prophecy that has, of course, been realized. The Swiss government investigated the affair and having obtained proof of it, has sent a strong protest to Berlin. For one country to violate the sovereignty of another by spiriting away one of its residents is regarded as a serious breach of international law. The Swiss believe that the kidnapping was not an act of private individuals, but was abetted by the German authorities.

Austria: Last week the Austrian government decided to follow the treaty-breaking policy undertaken by Chancellor Hitler. Under the treaties signed at the end of the war, Austria's forces were limited to 30,000. On April 3 she announced her intention of doubling that number and declared that she might increase it still more by introducing compulsory military service. Austria, however, did not rearm quite

as abruptly as Germany. Before acting, she made sure that France and Italy would not oppose her move, and she sent a delegate to Stresa to procure the formal consent of the great powers. It seemed likely that she would win it, for France and Italy want her to be strong enough to defend herself in case of German attack. Furthermore, they desire the good will of the countries that aided Germany during the last war. Hence they may consent to the rearming not only of Austria, but of Hungary and Bulgaria as well.

Luxemburg: Since 1922 the little independent duchy of Luxemburg has had an economic union with Belgium, but the move of Premier Van Zeeland in devaluing Belgian currency to 72 per cent of its former level has caused trouble between the two countries. Luxemburg was unwillingly obliged to devalue her currency too in order to protect her trade. She devalued hers only 10 per cent, however, and may abandon the customs union altogether. If she decides to go it alone, she may endeavor to procure commercial treaties with Great Britain and other countries with a view to marketing her iron and steel.

Sweden: The munitions firms of Sweden, like those of Great Britain and the United States, have been subject to the investigation of a government commission. As a result of its commission's report, the Swedish legislature enacted a law establishing a certain amount of control over the manufacture of arms. One house of the legislature decided in favor of complete governmental control, but the other modified its act to permit those arms firms that now exist to continue without a special license. They will be required, however, to conform to certain restrictions and to report all details of their business to the government. The Swedish believe that publicity of this sort is an important step in preventing armament firms from exciting war fever for the sake of increasing their sales.

Japan: We have had much to say of European diplomatic journeys and secret conferences lately, but Japan is enjoying a diplomatic visit of quite another kind. Emperor Kang Teh of Manchoukuo is calling upon Emperor Hirohito of Japan, and all politics are strictly barred.

The occasion has given the Empire of the Rising Sun an opportunity to show its most lavish hospitality. Seventy warships escorted the Manchu emperor, who until a couple of years ago was plain Henry Pu-Yi, to Yokohama. When he reached

Tokyo, he drove through the streets with Hirohito in silent splendor. Spectators were kept a block away to emphasize the mightiness of their imperial majesties. Japanese blossoms scented the air that the royal visitor breathed.

On April 6 Kang Teh gave his thanks to



© Acme

CAPTAIN ANTHONY EDEN

Hirohito for restoring him to the throne of his Manchu ancestors. He presented him with the Order of the Orchid, and Hirohito graciously responded by awarding Kang Teh the Order of the Chrysanthemum. It was in truth a very flowery festival.

Chile: When it became clear that the League of Nations' plan for a peaceful settlement of the Chaco war would fail, Argentinian and Chilean diplomats got together and tried to persuade Bolivia and Paraguay to arbitrate their quarrel. Although they have failed in all their previous attempts to end the war, it seemed last week that their latest effort might succeed. They have secured the consent of the warring powers to cease hostilities on condition that neighboring countries will guarantee their security until a final settlement may be reached. Chile and Argentina have invited Brazil, Peru, and the United States to aid in settling the quarrel. These nations have all agreed to cooperate. Thus, another effort will be made to adjust the long-standing Chaco conflict. Whether the peacemakers will be more successful this time than they have been in the past remains to be seen.

Tibet: Many men have lost their lives trying to scale Everest, the highest mountain in the world. Men have reached within a few hundred feet of its icy summit and have even flown over it by airplane, but its peak still defies the explorer's flag. Mr. Hugh Ruttledge, whose expedition came so close to success in 1933, has just secured permission to make another attempt this year. Past experience has shown him that changes in equipment will be necessary. His tents will be made of a much tougher material to prevent the snow from driving through their walls.

One of the most difficult problems of Everest expeditions is to secure reliable native guides. Tibetan villagers believe Everest to be a sacred mountain and think disaster may befall them if men venture to climb it. For a comparatively civilized people they are surprisingly unaware of the rest of the world. Professor Dyrenfurth of Switzerland, who recently explored the country, astonished them by the old explorer's magic of playing a phonograph.



BARKING DOGS NEVER BITE

—Owensboro (Ky.) MESSENGER

—From The Washington Post
DANZIG AND THE POLISH CORRIDOR

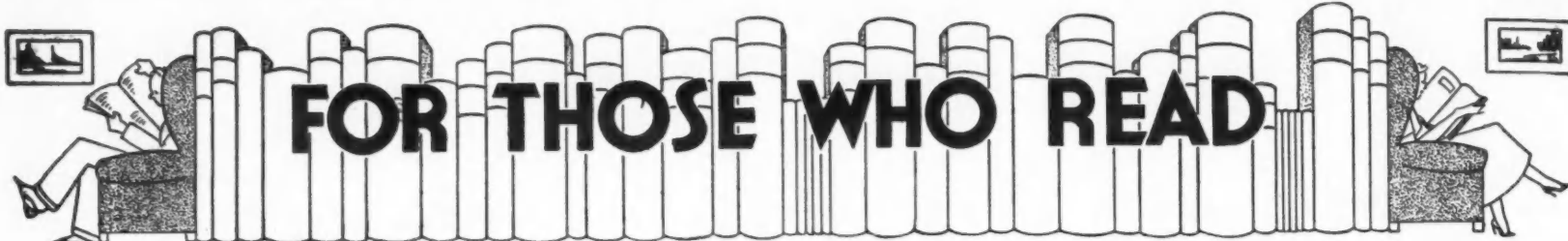
land might have an outlet to the sea. A League of Nations high commissioner was appointed to settle controversies between the Poles and Danzig.

The Nazi belief in racial unity naturally had its effect upon Danzig, 95 per cent of whose inhabitants were German. Soon after Hitler came into power, the Nazis won a majority in the Danzig legislature. They wanted Danzig's return to Germany, but a German-Polish Treaty of 1934 provided that they remain independent for 10 years. The only recourse open to the Danzig Nazis seemed to be to prepare for 1944 by creating a little Nazi state of their own. They decided to call a new election on April 7, so as to obtain the two-thirds majority needed to remodel Danzig's constitution. A typical Nazi election show was staged. Storm Troops and Black Shirts paraded, anti-Jewish posters were pasted on shop windows, and torchlight processions were organized in honor of the three Hitler lieutenants who came to make campaign speeches.

Poland, which wants to keep her seaport open forever, was frankly disturbed at the Nazi outburst. She sent her own speakers to unify the small Polish opposition. Socialists, Communists, Catholics, and other non-Polish anti-Nazis dared not electioneer for their candidates. It seemed as though the Nazis would steam-roller their way through all opposition.

But when votes were counted, the Nazis won just over 59 per cent of the votes. There is reason to believe that if some voters had not been intimidated by the Nazis their majority would have been less.

Italy: Last Thursday the eyes of Europe turned toward Stresa, Italy, where French, British, and Italian diplomats gathered to confer on the European situation. Since



Edwin Arlington Robinson

In the person of Edwin Arlington Robinson, who died recently, the nation has lost its most distinguished and best-loved poet. In America, Mr. Robinson was more widely read than any other serious poet of our time, and was thrice awarded the Pulitzer prize for poetry. Success did not come easily, however. A New Englander by birth, Mr. Robinson attended Harvard University for two years, but was obliged to withdraw for lack of money. He earned a precarious living as porter and janitor for several years after this, until Theodore Roosevelt, at that time President, became interested in his poems, and gave him a position in the government.

Mr. Robinson found his inspiration chiefly in scenes from his native New England, and from the legends of King Arthur's day. His best-known works are "Tristram," a long narrative poem, "The Man Against the Sky," and "Collected Poems." Robinson often wrote of commonplace events and everyday people, but his poetry is at all times distinguished by great beauty. The following short poem is characteristic of the power and beauty that marked Mr. Robinson's work:



E. A. ROBINSON

THE HOUSE ON THE HILL

They are all gone away,
The House is shut and still,
There is nothing more to say.

Through broken walls and gray
The winds blow bleak and shrill:
They are all gone away.

Nor is there one today
To speak them good or ill:
There is nothing more to say.

Why is it then we stray
Around the sunken sill?
They are all gone away,

And our poor fancy-play
For them is wasted skill:
There is nothing more to say.

There is ruin and decay
In the House on the Hill:
They are all gone away,
There is nothing more to say.

Family History

"The Grass Grows Green," by Hortense Lion (Cambridge: Houghton Mifflin Co. \$2.50), is a novel of three generations. It takes us back to the middle of the last century, when the first of a great tide of immigrants was beginning to come to America in search of fame and fortune. Frieda and her brother are two Germans who leave their home in Bavaria to settle in the United States. The former marries and brings up her family here. The author portrays her rise from poverty to wealth, following her fortune through the Civil War, and the years of peace which ensued, down to the beginning of the World War. It is an interesting picture of the changing social scene in America during the last 60 years.

Finding Mozart

For nearly 200 years, the musical compositions of Mozart have enjoyed a conspicuous place on concert programs. Audiences never tire of the tuneful, delicate sonatas which are as fresh and delightful today as when Mozart first wrote them. Their gaiety is in strange contrast to his life, which was sad and difficult. You may

read all about it in a book by Henri Gheon, entitled, "In Search of Mozart" (New York: Sheed and Ward, Inc. \$4). Proclaimed as a genius when he was a child, Mozart performed before all the courts of Europe at the early age of six. The mature genius of his later years went unrecognized, however, and it was all he could do to earn enough to keep body and soul together. M. Gheon, who is a music lover himself, draws a sympathetic characterization of the great composer. By recreating the charm which was a part of Mozart's personality, the author has made him live again in these pages, not so much as Mozart the genius, but as Mozart the man.

Thomas Wolfe

A book which definitely heads the list of those you must read is Thomas Wolfe's "Of Time and the River" (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$3). Although more than one book has been proclaimed by the critics as "the great American novel," this book comes nearer fulfilling that definition than anything we have read for a long time. There is scarcely any plot—it is simply the record of five years in the life of Eugene Gant, from the time he leaves his small home town to study at Harvard to his return from a sojourn abroad five years later. The important thing about this book is the style in which it is written, which is magnificent. Thomas Wolfe has a superb command of the English language, and words flow from his pen in the profusion of a Fielding or a Victor Hugo. The characters are strongly and vividly drawn. "Of Time and the River" is a lengthy novel, containing something over 900 pages, but you will be well repaid for any time you spend in reading it.

Versailles

The course of world events today is determined largely by a piece of paper signed 16 years ago—the Treaty of Versailles. Who were the men involved in drawing up this important document? What were the circumstances which led to its terms? What are these terms, and how are they regarded by the different countries today? These and similar important questions are answered simply and definitely in a readable little book entitled, "The Treaty of Versailles and After," by Lord Riddell, Prof. C. K. Webster, and others (New York: Oxford University Press. \$1.50). The nine people who contribute its different chapters are all authorities on this subject. It is a very timely volume, considering the tense situation in Europe today, for

which the Treaty of Versailles may be held directly responsible.

"Hillikins"

An entertaining novel about young people and their problems today is "The Hillikin," by Rollo Walter Brown (New York: Coward-McCann. \$2.50). The central character, Giles Dabney, calls himself a hillikin because he comes from a small town in the hills of Ohio. Determined to break away from his rather restricted environment, Giles travels to Boston and enrolls in Harvard. He earns his way as he goes by working at odd jobs in Cambridge. His real struggles begin when he leaves college, however, and locates in an ugly, dirty, and smoky city near the Allegheny Mountains. Struck by ugliness, he draws up plans to make it more beautiful. His efforts to get his plans accepted are at first unsuccessful, but finally everything is brought to a happy conclusion. A romantic love story adds to the interest of this book.

With the Magazines

The magazine "Today" is edited by Raymond Moley, one of the original brain trusters and naturally an ardent defender of the New Deal. In introducing the leading article of the April 6 issue, Mr. Moley states that it may be well to publish an article which would offset his own highly optimistic opinion of the administration and that no one is more competent to do this than W. M. Kiplinger, a Washington political observer of high reputation.

Here is what Mr. Kiplinger believes is the matter with the New Deal: 1. Too much attempted all at once. 2. Too much expected of government; too much strain put upon it. 3. Too many pet causes with the New Deal. 4. Too much money to spend. 5. Too much quick thinking, too much "inspiration," too little careful planning. 6. Too much partisanship (political appointments instead of merit system). 7. Too much petty irregularity, that is, carelessness with government money. 8. Too much confused Washington publicity; contradictory statements constantly handed out to the press. 9. Too little coordination of policies. 10. Too little definite sense of responsibility.

Mr. Kiplinger supports these charges with short paragraphs of detailed comment. This is not an ill-tempered parti-



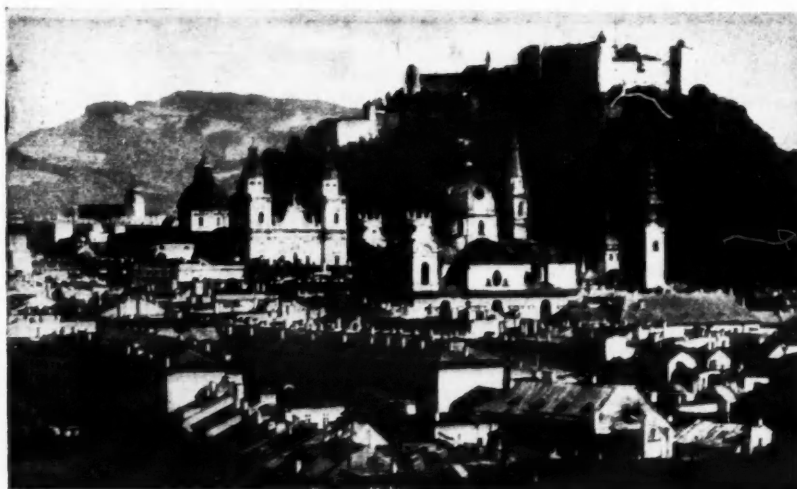
ILLUSTRATION FROM "THE GRASS GROWS GREEN."

san attack on the administration, but a well-considered and sincere criticism.

Life on the frontier 75 or 100 years ago may have been just one round after another of shooting Indians, but in Bernard DeVoto's boyhood in the Utah of 20 years ago things were different. In "Fossil Remnants of the Frontier," which appears in the April issue of *Harper's*, Mr. DeVoto describes the Indians of his town as dirty, grunting, and generally drunken relics, "whom it was desirable not to approach too closely lest your mother be obliged to wash your hair with kerosene." But the memory of the old frontier lingered on. Boys all owned weapons and were skillful in using them. Indeed Mr. DeVoto knew "no boy who did not regularly strap a revolver on his belt and disappear into the hills" for a few days at a time. These reminiscences of a day which is not long past make grand reading.

For a few days after the death of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes the papers were filled with sketches of his life and glowing tributes to his greatness. Newspaper accounts, however, are necessarily sketchy and lacking in depth, and are generally followed by more critical essays in the weekly and monthly journals. One of the first of these, in connection with Justice Holmes, is Morris Cohen's excellent analysis in the *New Republic* for April 3, 1935, called "Justice Holmes."

Although Dr. Cohen believes that circumstances prevented Holmes from influencing constitutional law as much as some of his great predecessors, such as Marshall and Taney, he thinks that "no other man ever brought to the judicial office his legal learning and philosophic power." But it is to Holmes' personality that Dr. Cohen pays his most eloquent tribute. Justice Holmes, he writes, "makes you feel that the art of living is worth while. . . . His conversation and bearing were like a rare music that lingers in one's memory."



OLD SALZBURG—WHERE MOZART WAS BORN

Illustration from "In Search of Mozart" by Henri Gheon.

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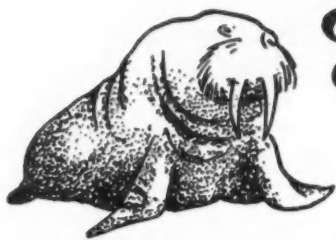
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The Walrus

"The time has come, the walrus said, to talk of many things: of shoes—and ships—and sealing wax—of cabbages—and kings."

Cabinet Rumors—There probably never is a time in the life of any cabinet when there are not rumors about the resignation of one or more of the members. Sometimes these rumors are justified, and on other occasions, they are not. Just now stories are going about concerning the probable tenure of several members of President Roosevelt's cabinet. There is quite a little talk about the possible resignation of Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins. Miss Perkins has had a rather hard job from the first. The leaders of union labor never have liked her because they wanted a labor union man, not an outsider, not merely a labor sympathizer, as the labor secretary. Business in general has been suspicious of Miss Perkins because of her known friendliness toward labor. The labor secretary's disposition has been against her. She is quite petulant and often becomes angry and behaves like a spoiled child. The result is that she has never been in an especially strong position, and from time to time there have been rumors of her impending resignation. But there appears to be no particular reason just now for thinking that it is near.

Postmaster Farley has been the butt of much criticism because of the way he deals out jobs. He is supposed to stand for the old spoils system. He is the arch-politician in the cabinet. It is now taken for granted that he will resign soon, but he will maintain his position of the Democratic National Committee and will direct President Roosevelt's campaign for reelection.

Another cabinet member about whom there is much gossip is Secretary of Commerce Daniel Roper. He is more friendly to the business interests than most other members of the Roosevelt cabinet and has frequently been looked upon as their representative. But while friendly to business he appears not to be a very competent business man himself. There is little doubt but that his department is running at loose ends because of the lack of a strong guiding hand. It is generally rumored that he will resign before many months.

Attorney General Cummings was not originally slated for a cabinet position but was chosen at the last moment because of the death of the appointee, Senator Walsh of Montana. It was generally supposed at the time that Cummings would give way to someone else before long, and rumors to that effect are still going the rounds.

✱ ✱

Belated Acclaim—One of the interesting spectacles attending the celebration of the anniversary of America's entrance into the World War, April 6, occurred in Statuary Hall, the large circular compartment in the Capitol building where the states of the union place statues of their heroes. This spectacle was the placing of a wreath before the statue of Robert M. La Follette, former senator from Wisconsin, the senator who 18 years ago led the opposition to America's entrance into the World War. He was an outcast in those days. But there are many people today, whether a majority or not no one can say, who wonder whether he may not have been as patriotic and as wise as those who cried him down on that fateful day.

✱ ✱

Business Trends—Are we recovering from the depression? Recently published figures are encouraging. It appears that incomes are larger, for to date 40 per cent more has been collected in income taxes than during the same period in 1934. The Department of Commerce reports that, taking into account employment, factory production, payrolls, farm income, and other evidences which are gathered, business as a whole during the first two months

of 1935 was 12 per cent better than during the first two months of 1934. And here is another straw which perhaps shows how the wind is blowing. Florida, which draws tourists and winter boarders from all over the country, is said to be doing the best business it has done for nine years. Despite these hopeful signs, the general prediction among business and political leaders is that we may expect more than the seasonal slump until the middle of the summer. Then perhaps, Congress having adjourned, things will look up again.

✱ ✱

Crime Deterrent—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, producers of movies, are running an unusual series of crime pictures. These pictures are realistic, taken from life. They do not show criminals to be heroes or children of good fortune. The pictures show how criminals are tracked and caught and punished. It is a fact, of course, that, while many particular crimes go unpunished, most habitual criminals are eventually caught. Few wholly escape. These picture producers are doing a good thing to present this side of the case.

—The Walrus

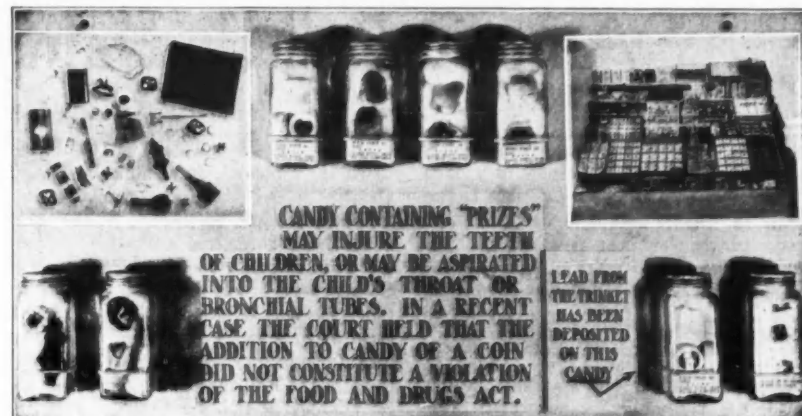
New Food and Drug Law Is Considered

(Concluded from page 1, column 1)

dispense injurious articles, and while they may resort to a certain amount of exaggeration in their advertising they do not make completely misleading statements. It is to the "minority of evaders and chisellers," as President Roosevelt put it in his recent message to Congress on the subject, that the new bill is directed. It seeks to accomplish the following things:

1. Bring together all the work of regulating and enforcing pure food and drug legislation under the Department of Agriculture. At present these duties are divided between the Department of Agriculture and the Federal Trade Commission, the government agency which supervises trade practices in interstate commerce.

2. Establish two advisory committees to give counsel to the secretary of agriculture in matters pertaining to foods, drugs, and cosmetics. These committees are to be appointed by the President. One would be composed of five members chosen on the basis of their scientific ability. The



—Courtesy Food and Drug Administration
THE DANGER OF CANDY PACKAGES CONTAINING PRIZES
The Copeland Food and Drug bill seeks to cure evils of this kind.

other board would consist of seven members, three representing the public, two representing industry, and two the Food and Drug Administration of the Department of Agriculture.

3. The secretary of agriculture would have the power to issue regulations affecting the sale of foods, drugs, and cosmetics, but only after they had been approved by the advisory committees. Thus, a check is placed on the secretary of agriculture.

4. The sale of impure and dishonestly branded cosmetics would be prevented. False advertising of cosmetics would be banned. The same is true of mechanical devices.

5. The manufacturer or distributor who puts out false advertising of foods, drugs, and cosmetics will be held responsible. The medium through which that advertising reaches the public (newspapers, radio stations, etc.) will not be responsible but will be obliged to give the government full information with regard to those who place the advertising.

6. The secretary of agriculture would have the power to establish standards of quality for all canned or preserved foods. He would also have the power to prescribe the minimum amounts of poisonous matter (preservatives, etc.) which may be added to food products within his jurisdiction.

7. If drugs are habit-forming, the fact must be stated on the label.

These are the principal provisions of the Copeland Food and Drug Act as introduced into the Senate. There are several other food and drug bills in Congress but the Copeland act is the only one which is being seriously considered. It is, naturally, meeting with severe opposition.

Opposition

The chief opponents of such strict food and drug legislation comes from a number of the manufacturers themselves and from newspapers and magazines. Some of these interests are against the bill for purely selfish reasons; others disfavor it because they sincerely think it will not accomplish its purpose.

The selfish opposition consists, of course, of manufacturers who turn out the products which could no longer be sold if the bill were made into law. In a number of cases good businesses have been built up by the sale of drugs which may be entirely harmless and worthless, or decidedly injurious, but in any case dishonest. Under the proposed laws these companies would be confined to statements of direct fact, not only on their labels but also in their advertising. They would either have to change their products drastically or retire from business.

And some publishing interests oppose the bill purely because they fear a decline in advertising revenue, which is the life blood of nearly all commercial publications. This is true chiefly of the cheap fiction magazines, small daily and weekly newspapers and other periodicals which obtain much of their revenue from advertisements of patent medicines, mechanical devices, and other

products which may be harmful. Opposition from this group, however, is waning. There has been such a strong campaign to marshal public opinion against the sale of injurious drugs that the advertising of such products is not as popularly received as it formerly was.

More serious complaint against the bill is made on the ground that it places too great powers in the hands of the secretary of agriculture. Publishers argue that it would give him a virtual dictatorship over a considerable portion of advertising and that this would serve to throttle business. Manufacturers would hesitate to make statements of a bragging nature—the real drawing power of advertising—for fear of getting into trouble with the Food and Drug Administration.

Opponents of the Copeland bill would prefer to have any new powers given to the Federal Trade Commission, which already has the power to take action against dishonest advertising. They say that the Federal Trade Commission is the legally established agency of the government to carry out such functions as are proposed in the Copeland bill, and that there is no reason for delegating such duties to the secretary of agriculture. The claim is made that it would mean the duplication of work on the part of two departments.

In Support

Advocates of the bill are prompt to answer these charges. They contend that the secretary of agriculture would not become a "czar" over advertising. They point to the record of the Food and Drug Administration for a wise discharge of its duties over a number of years. The department, they say, has always been reasonable in its dealings with manufacturers. Moreover, they point out, the Supreme Court itself has ruled that there is nothing illegal in "trade puffing," or in the making of glowing statements to advertise products. But, it is argued, there is a difference between boasting and truth. It is in this latter respect that the Copeland bill seeks to correct abuses.

Supporters of the bill insist that the powers should be given to the Department of Agriculture and that the matter should not be left with the Federal Trade Commission. The Department of Agriculture, they say, is scientifically equipped to do the work of inspection and supervision. The Food and Drug Administration has been in existence since 1927 and has a personnel trained to handle food and drug problems. In addition to this it is argued that the Federal Trade Commission has not been very successful in curbing unfair advertising. Shrewd lawyers working for manufacturers have succeeded in delaying and even preventing action by the trade commission. It is agreed that the trade commission has done some valuable work but it is maintained the Department of Agriculture will do a better job of enforcing the law.

Whether the Copeland bill will be passed during the present session of Congress is questionable. The Senate and House have so many urgent bills on their calendars that one of the greatest legislative jams in recent years is predicted. It is believed that important items will have to be dropped and it is likely that the food and drug bill will be among them.



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ROYAL S. COPELAND

America's Neutrality Policy Reexamined

(Concluded from page 1, column 4)

must see just what is meant by neutrality and neutral rights and just how they have placed us in such awkward positions in the past. It is important that we understand just what the American position has been during the last 150 years of our national existence and what changes would now be made in that policy.

Rights and Duties

When war breaks out anywhere in the world, the nations are divided into two classes, neutrals and belligerents. The belligerents are those which are directly involved in the conflict, sometimes only two in number and sometimes a dozen or more. The neutrals are those which remain at peace. According to the rules of international law, each group of nations is held to have certain rights and certain duties. They are called upon to adhere to certain rules during the conduct of the war. What makes this problem so complicated is the fact that the interests of the belligerents and those of the neutrals are often directly opposed. Belligerents, for example, seek to do everything possible to prevent their enemies from receiving aid from neutrals, while neutrals are anxious to carry on as much trade as possible without interference. Because the respect of neutral rights often cripples the belligerents' cause, these rights have time and again been flagrantly and repeatedly violated by belligerents.

While neutrals do enjoy certain rights in time of war, they are also confronted by certain obligations. They must, for example, avoid doing anything which would favor one of the belligerents at the expense of the other. That is the essence of neutrality. They may not trade with only one of the belligerents. A neutral government is itself obliged to refrain from supplying either belligerent with materials of war, such as ammunition, although its citizens may do so. Under no circumstances, however, may a neutral or its citizens supply warships to a belligerent. Of course, citizens who sell war materials to a belligerent do so at their own risk, for nations at war have the right to search neutral ships and confiscate war materials going to their enemy. Materials which are directly used in war are known as contraband and are always subject to seizure by the belligerents.

In goods which are not directly used for war, the so-called noncontraband goods, neutrals have the right to carry on trade with both belligerents or both groups of belligerents. Belligerents should, under international law, respect this right. They may, of course, stop ships carrying goods in order to determine whether contraband goods are on board, but they may not seize goods which are definitely noncontraband. Under no circumstances do they have the right to sink the ships of neutrals or kill the citizens of neutral powers.

World War Experience

It is obvious that the question of neutrality and neutral rights causes all sorts of trouble. During the World War, what we considered our neutral rights were frequently violated by both Germany and the Allies. At the very outset of the war, we got into serious difficulties with England. The British published such a long list of articles which they considered contraband that it became virtually impossible to trade in anything that was not contraband.

Starting with the letter "a" it went right down the alphabet, from abrasive materials to "yeast." Obviously many of these articles were not contraband in the strict sense of the word. And, instead of stopping at sea vessels carrying American goods to Germany in order to determine whether they carried contraband, the British hauled them into British ports where they were held for months. So strained did our relations with England become during the early stages of the war that an official of the British government wrote after the conflict was over, "We came nearer to a breach with the United States than even the most cautious of us realized at the time."

As the war progressed, however, these troubles with England were forgotten, so much more serious were our difficulties with Germany. When the Germans launched their great submarine offensive, neutral rights were thrown to the winds. Early in 1917, the German government warned all neutral nations that any neutral ship entering the barred zones around Great Britain, France, Italy, and the eastern Mediterranean would do so at its own risk. This was the last straw. President Wilson severed diplomatic relations with Germany, and it was only a few weeks before we officially declared war on her.

Thus it can be seen that for more than two years the United States was continuously harassed as a result of its stand on neutrality and that it was eventually drawn into the conflict because it was unable otherwise to enforce its neutral rights. Speaking of the violations of these rights which occurred during the war, one authority on international law has declared that "never since the days of the Napoleonic era had our diplomatic correspondence been so cavalierly treated. It appeared that 'unarmed neutrality' had no rights that any belligerents held worth respect."

Changes Proposed

In view of our unfortunate experiences of the past during the Napoleonic wars, when we were nearly drawn into a war with France in 1898 and when we were actually drawn into one with England in 1812, and during the World War when we got into serious difficulties with both Germany and England—thoughtful students of public affairs are wondering if our entire policy of neutrality should not be re-examined and altered if necessary. They claim that as sure as the insistence upon our neutral rights got us into war in the past it will do so again if we insist upon

that same policy. And now, it is argued, is the time to be thinking about what we shall do, when we can look at the problem calmly and work out a careful plan.

If the plans which are now being considered are adopted by Congress, our policy of neutrality will undergo revolutionary changes. It will, in fact, be practically scrapped, for the crux of the plans now proposed is said to be the abandonment of our rights to trade with belligerents in time of war. Those who favor the adoption of such a drastic measure as this claim that it is the only way to prevent the recurrence of what happened from August, 1914, until April, 1917, when we declared war on Germany. In another war, it is argued, conditions would be even worse, for certainly the contraband lists would be so extended as to include practically every article of trade. If American citizens want to trade with warring nations, well and good, but let them understand that they do so at their own risk and that the government will not seek to protect them as it has done in the past.

Belligerent Trade

Moreover, American citizens should be warned to stay out of danger zones in time of war. It is proposed that all citizens should be given to understand that if they go into the war zones they do so at their own risk. As Senator Nye has very forcefully voiced the views of those who advocate a drastic plan: "I believe that steps should be taken immediately to see that whenever any American enters a war zone his government will not be at his heels to protect him. There is no reason why this country should be involved in a foreign war because a citizen, on personal or highly profitable business, ventures into the war area and gets hurt. The same is true of American shipping."

Another important proposal that is made in connection with our neutrality policy is that Americans should be prohibited from making loans to belligerent nations. It is argued that by permitting such loans, the government is in fact encouraging an unneutral attitude on the part of its citizens, for those who make loans have a stake in the outcome of the war. If the belligerent to which they have made the loan is defeated they run the risk of losing their money. In order to protect their investment, they may even go so far as to encourage the United States government to enter the war on the side of the nation to which they have lent money.

There are, of course, a number of other definite proposals in the drive now being made to alter our neutrality policy. They all have the same purpose, that is, to remove the causes of friction between neutrals and belligerents in time of war. Nearly all of these, however, deal either directly or indirectly with commercial or financial subjects. The views of those who argue for the adoption of a drastic program have been vitally affected by the admonitions of Charles Warren, who was largely charged with the difficult task of securing the enforcement of American neutral rights from 1914 to 1917. Mr. Warren has been working with the Department of State in its present attempt to devise a new policy of neutrality. He has warned that "in the future, in order to keep out of war, it will be necessary for the United States to do far more than merely comply with its legal obligations of neutrality. In order to avoid friction and complications with the belligerents, it must be prepared to impose upon the actions of its citizens greater restrictions than international law requires. It must also be prepared to relinquish many rights which it has heretofore claimed and asserted, and to yield to contentions by belligerents, hitherto denied by it, with respect to interference with the trade and travel of its citizens on the high seas, if the interests of the belligerents seem to them so to require."



—Kirby in N. Y. WORLD-TELEGRAM
WE SAY THIS IN 1935
"Whatever comes I keep out!" says Uncle Sam. Will he be more successful in 1935 than he was in 1917?

erents, it must be prepared to impose upon the actions of its citizens greater restrictions than international law requires. It must also be prepared to relinquish many rights which it has heretofore claimed and asserted, and to yield to contentions by belligerents, hitherto denied by it, with respect to interference with the trade and travel of its citizens on the high seas, if the interests of the belligerents seem to them so to require."

It is admitted that the adoption of a neutrality policy such as that which has been outlined would deprive the United States of a great deal of trade that it would otherwise get in time of war. For that reason, the plans now being studied and recommended are certain to encounter bitter opposition. Many will oppose too drastic action, claiming that it would be a mistake to commit ourselves beforehand to a definite course of action which might prove unnecessary once a war actually broke out. It would be better, it is argued, to give the President authority to take what action he deemed necessary to meet the peculiar conditions of the time.

Something to Think About

1. Why is it declared that the Food and Drug Act of 1906 is inadequate to cope with the present situation?
2. In your opinion, would it be unwise to place effective controlling powers over the sale and advertising of foods, drugs, and cosmetics in the hands of the secretary of agriculture?
3. Do you think that the Federal Trade Commission rather than the Department of Agriculture should control foods, drugs, and cosmetics?
4. Explain how the American policy of neutrality got us into the War of 1812 and the World War.
5. From which course do you think the United States would gain the greatest benefits in time of war: insistence upon our right as a neutral to carry on trade, or the foregoing of our right to continue trading with belligerent nations?
6. Do you think it would be a wiser policy for the United States to commit itself in advance to a definite course in case of a future war or to give the President wide powers in determining what our neutrality policy shall be in case of war?
7. What is the essential difference in the attitudes of John, Mary, and Charles on relief? With which view do you most nearly agree?
8. What significance do you attach to the recent elections in Danzig?

REFERENCES: (a) Prepare for Neutrality. *Yale Review*, March, 1935, pp. 467-478. (b) Cost of Peace. *Foreign Affairs*, July, 1934, pp. 567-578. (c) False and Fraudulent. *North American Review*, November, 1933, pp. 439-447. (d) Should Congress Enact a New Food and Drugs Law? *Congressional Digest*, March, 1934.

PRONUNCIATIONS: Mazzini (mat-see'-nee), Danzig (don'seek), Stresa (stray'sah), Berthold Jacob (bair'tolt yah'kop—both o's as in or), Van Zeeland (vahn zay'lahnd), Para (pah-rah'), Pu-Yi (poo'ee).



—Darling in Des Moines REGISTER
WE SAID THIS IN 1915
But we did not stay in America and soon found ourselves engaged in a world war.

THIS is the eighth installment of this feature. These three imaginary students will meet each week on this page to talk things over. The same characters will be continued from week to week. We believe that readers of THE AMERICAN OBSERVER will find it interesting to follow these discussions week by week and thus to become acquainted with the points of view and personalities of each of the three characters. Needless to say, the views expressed on this page are not to be taken as the opinions of the editors of THE AMERICAN OBSERVER.

Mary: At last the big relief bill has been passed. The Senate and the House seemed to wrangle interminably over its provisions, but, after all, it means something for a government to decide to spend nearly five billion dollars in a year. We get so accustomed to big figures that we scarcely realize how much money that is. But it is 35 or 40 dollars for every man, woman, and child in the country.

Think what an expenditure of five billion dollars would have looked like back in the days before the war! Less than half a century ago there was quite a sensation because a billion dollars had been appropriated by one Congress—not one session, but the Congress during its entire term of two years. It was called the "billion-dollar Congress." It had spent half a billion dollars a year. Now it is proposed that Congress appropriate 10 times as much as the entire cost of running the government for a year half a century ago, and this sum is going, not for all the expenses of the government, but merely for the relief of those who are in distress. I suppose we shouldn't complain because Congress took a few weeks to consider the bill.

John: I think it should have taken a little more time and then that it should have defeated the measure. The country can't stand such reckless spending. The government will soon be bankrupt if this sort of thing is kept up.

Charles: You'd let hungry people starve, would you? In my opinion, if the government didn't relieve the hungry there would be such an uprising that it wouldn't make much difference whether the government were bankrupt or not. But that isn't the main reason why I want to see the relief work go on. The chief reason is that I want human suffering to be relieved. I think it would be as bad for a sixth of the people to suffer from cold and hunger as it would be for the government to be bankrupt.

John: I'm not talking about letting people starve. Of course we shouldn't do that. But we needn't pour out five billion dollars in order to keep people from starving. Half that much would be enough.

Mary: There are 20 million people on relief—that many are being cared for by the government. No one knows how many are being looked after by relatives and by private charity. But two billion dollars divided among 20 million would be only \$100 each, or about \$2 a week. One could not live very well on that.

John: He could keep from starving. And besides, the states and cities and charitable organizations are raising a lot of money, and they could raise more.

Charles: But all the money that is raised; all the government appropriates, doesn't get to the needy. It costs something to administer such a sum; to see that it is distributed properly.

John: Yes, it costs too much. And here's something else for you to think about. A lot of the money gets into the hands of people who don't need it. People who have money get relief. Others go on relief when their relatives could take care of them. And more people than you would think refuse

Talking Things Over

The Five Billion Dollar Relief Plan—Is It Necessary? Will It Bankrupt the Government, and if so, What Then?

to work when they can get their living for nothing. I think that about half the relief money is wasted on people who don't need it. That makes it harder on the really deserving.

Mary: No doubt there is waste. I presume that there are people who take relief when they could get along without it, though I don't think at all that half those now on relief are in that class. But wastes of that kind will always occur. When the nation takes over the tremendous job of feeding a sixth of the whole population there will be loopholes and wastes. We can't help that. We must go on relieving distress and doing the best we can. There was a great deal of graft and inefficiency and waste during the war, but sensible people realized that it was just an inevitable part of carrying on a great enterprise of that kind in a crisis and in a tremendous hurry. We're in a crisis again now. A great disaster has overtaken the country and a sixth of the people are helpless. We have to

take care of them and we have to do it quickly. The only thing to do is to see that all the worthy people have help even if that means that a few unworthy ones step in and get relief.

John: But it's a pretty bad thing for people who work to have to support a lot of people who won't work. Plenty of people on the relief rolls could get work if they wanted it.

Mary: John, that statement really makes me angry. I know that many people are saying the very thing you have said. Several congressmen have made such remarks. But it simply isn't true. Where could you find a job if you went out to get one today? Where could I? I've seen too many people walking the streets day after day and week after week looking for work. I've known a number of men, heads of families, who are positively heartbroken because they can't find jobs. I know of family tragedies right here in this town which result from failure to find work. And still you go about with the unfeeling comment that people could find work if they wanted it. Why don't the private employers give people work? They complain about the cost of relief. Let them furnish jobs to the

unemployed, and there won't be any need for relief. If they can't give the people work, let them keep their mouths shut when the government feeds the men and women they fired or refused to give jobs.

John: If the government didn't spend so much money, private business would pick up and give more people employment. Business men are uneasy so long as the government is going so rapidly into debt. They are afraid of inflation. They don't know what will happen. They are afraid to invest money, to expand, to increase production, to take on more men.

Charles: Do the business men know for sure what would happen if the government stopped spending and let millions suffer? I'll confess I don't. And I don't think you do. It would be the biggest gamble we've ever undertaken. My guess is that there would be unrest amounting almost to revolution; that there would be business stagnation and panic much worse than that of March, 1933.

Mary: And here's another point. The government isn't going to spend the five billion, nearly five billion, in direct relief. It will carry on public works. Probably there will be low-cost housing on a large scale. This will help the building industry. It will create a demand for building materials. It will set people to work indirectly. It will stimulate private industry. If anything will get us out of the depression, this great work-relief program will do it.

John: Well, Charles spoke of a big gamble a while ago. This is another one. Maybe the spending spree of the government will stimulate private industry, and maybe it won't. If it doesn't, heaven help us, for we'll be in a bad fix for fair if we use up all the government credit so that it can't any longer give relief and if private industry isn't stimulated. What will we do if there are still 10 million or so unemployed when the government runs out of money and credit?

Mary: Well, we haven't come to that point yet. Would you say that because people may possibly starve at some time in the future we should let them starve now?

Charles: Let me answer John's question. You say, suppose we don't get over the depression right away. Suppose after a while there are still 10 million unemployed. Then you suppose the case that the government runs out of credit. You mean that it can't borrow any more. In other words, the people who have money won't lend it to the government. Then you shake your head gloomily and say, what could we do? I'll tell you what the government could do—what it would have to do. It would take over the industries and put people to work. It would produce plenty of goods of all kinds and it would distribute these goods among the people. No one would go hungry and no one would go unclothed.

But business men would go without profits.

John: So you would have the government confiscate property, would you? You would have it deprive people of their profits?

Charles: Not at all. You just supposed the case that millions were unemployed because business was not operating and the government was bankrupt. In that case business would be at a standstill. There would be a crash—chaos. There wouldn't be any profits. The government would merely step in to bring order out of the chaos. It would operate business which would otherwise be standing still.

Mary: Wouldn't that be socialism?

Charles: Call it what you will. I'm not interested in labels. John asked what could be done under certain circumstances, and I told him. That's all.

John: Do you think we are headed in that direction?

Charles: Yes, I rather think so. I'm strong for relief so long as it is necessary to prevent suffering, but I realize that we can't go on with this relief business indefinitely. The government's credit won't stand it, and the people won't stand it. It's a miserable mess for a sixth of the people to have to live on a dole—merely enough to keep alive on. It's a disgraceful situation. The people must have work. They must be self-supporting. If private industry can't put them to work, the government must. And so far as I can see, private industry isn't doing anything about it. The only reason that business seems to be better today than it was two years ago is that the government is spending and employing. When the government stops spending we'll be on our backs again—for a while—until the government takes hold of industry and runs it in order to produce the things the people need.

John: If the government undertakes that, we won't be at the end of our troubles but only at the beginning. For one thing, it's very unlikely that a huge business undertaking like that of running all the industries of the country and distributing the product among the people could be handled by a democratic government. There would have to be a dictator, as there is in Russia. Then there is no assurance that the dictator could run the nation's business efficiently. As likely as not we'd have a general breakdown and widespread starvation.

Charles: I see no reason why a democratic government couldn't run things if private business crashes and, as for efficiency, the government handled the war operations pretty well, and that was a tremendous undertaking. The government employed several million men and practically controlled nearly all the nation's industries. In case of necessity it could take over all of them.

Mary: Well, I don't think anything of the sort will be necessary. I think there are signs of a real business recovery. If we take care of the unfortunate for a while longer, there is an excellent chance that nearly everyone can find work. We won't have to give relief permanently—only through the crisis. That is what the government is doing, and, by the way, its credit shows no signs of failing.



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HARRY L. HOPKINS



RELIEF WORKERS ON HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION—UNDER THE BILL PASSED BY CONGRESS \$800,000,000 WILL BE DEVOTED TO THIS TYPE OF WORK AND TO THE ELIMINATION OF GRADE CROSSINGS



SINCE the beginning of the present century, the people of the United States have witnessed many changes in their economic life; changes so great, perhaps, as to affect them more vitally than anything which happened in any similar period of their history. We are all more or less familiar with the industrial changes, for they are constantly being called to our attention by the depression through which we are now passing. Ofttimes, we overlook the dynamic changes which have occurred in another branch of our national economy, agriculture. And yet in the short space of 34 years we have seen the industry which was responsible for our greatest early advances rise to heights unequalled in the long and eventful history of mankind, only to sink to dangerous depths of deterioration. So important has the change in American agriculture been that one often wonders if it might not be considered as marking the end of a period in American history.

The great period of agricultural prosperity

For 20 years, roughly from 1900 to 1920, American agriculture moved forward with unknown rapidity. At the turn of the century, the American farmer embarked upon what turned out to be the greatest period of his prosperity. In 14 short years, from 1900 to the outbreak of the World War, the value of American farm products more than doubled, although the agricultural population of the nation increased only a tenth. The progress of the farmer, during this period, was even greater than that of his brother, the industrialist. Whereas industrial prices rose but 30 per cent during the period, farm prices increased 50 per cent. If we turn to the period of the war and the years immediately following the war, we find an even rosier picture. A large number of American farmers actually became wealthy. The farmers of this country or any other country had never enjoyed such prosperity as came during those brief years. Many of them retired, selling their farms in Iowa or Kansas and moving to California to live on their savings and interest. Others, anxious to expand as their brother industrialists did, sank their savings into new lands, new and better farm equipment, with the hope of making more money. The future seemed bright, indeed, to the farmer of those two eventful decades.

WE NEED not here dwell at too great length upon the many woes which have befallen the farmer during the last 15 years. Depression, known to the nonagricultural population for only six years, has been with the farmer so long that he is likely to forget the good old days when land was selling for \$600 an acre and he was getting \$2.76 a bushel for his spring wheat. His prosperity came suddenly and tragically to an end in 1920, and, save for the blood transfusions which government aid has given him, he has been a sorry and woebegone figure ever since. He has been crushed with heavy taxes, haunted by the constant specter of foreclosure on his mortgage. His efforts to get ahead, or even to stand still, have been made hopelessly futile by sagging prices for what he has produced from the land.

The farmers expand with unusual rapidity

In a sense, the malady afflicting the farmer is the same as that which is now plaguing our entire economic body. During those balmy years, the farmer went on producing more and more. Lands which should never have been opened to production were sown in crops. Between 1910 and 1920, 40 million acres of pasture lands were turned into crop lands. Five million additional acres of

The Decline of American Agriculture

By David S. Muzzey and Paul D. Miller

forest lands were converted into farms. The government, by its reclamation and irrigation projects in various sections of the country, stimulated the cultivation of another three and a half million acres during the decade. And, in order to expand, the farmer went head over heels in debt. Between 1910 and 1926, according to the Department of Agriculture, farm mortgages increased from three and a half to nine and a half billion dollars. At the same time, taxes on farm property increased one and a half times. But all that did not bother the farmer, for he was in the midst of the greatest upward surge in his history.

LIKE the industrialist, the farmer laid chief emphasis upon the production side of the economic problem. He followed the cue of the manufacturer by introducing labor-saving machinery on the farm. In 11 years, from 1918 to 1929, the average farm increased its production 30 per cent, and the amount of farm products turned out by each worker increased by 50 per cent. But little thought

Changes which affected the farmer adversely

was paid to the consumption angle of the problem. Because the annual production of farm products was being disposed of at satisfactory prices, it was taken for granted that it could always be disposed of to the benefit of the farmer. Unfortunately, however, great changes in our whole economic life were taking place during those years. The output of farm goods, like the output of industrial products, was increasing much more rapidly than the ability of the people to buy all the goods. There was created a "surplus" which could not be disposed of on the home market. In the past, this surplus had always found a ready market abroad, especially during the World War when production increased so rapidly. Now, however, it was no longer possible to sell our surplus farm products abroad because the nations which had withdrawn from the world markets during the war again started shipping their wheat and corn and other products which competed with American products. Moreover, effective competitors were found in the newly developed agricultural countries of the world, such as Canada and Australia and Argentina and Russia, where production costs were lower because of the lower price of land and the better condition of the soil.

Then, too, there were changes right here at home which affected the farmer adversely. While the machine was helping the farmer to produce more, it dealt a severe blow to him by withdrawing an important demand for his products. Horses and mules were no longer used so much on the farm, with the result that there was a smaller demand for hay and grain. At the same time, the diet of the American people was undergoing an important change. Less bread was called for, and the American housewife began to serve less oatmeal and other cereals at the breakfast table. And, whereas the population of this country was formerly swelling by the large influx of foreign immigrants, this increase of consumers of farm products was stopped by our immigration restriction policy of the 1920's. These are but a few of the changes which oc-

curred and which placed the farmer in a position of economic inferiority.

THE present is not, of course, the first time in our history that the American farmer has occupied such an unfortunate position. The agricultural unrest of the 70's and the 80's and the 90's, voiced through such movements of political protest as the Grange, Greenbackism, and Populism, give evidence of temporary slumps in agriculture. But, in the past, we have always been able to count, sooner or later, on a renewed demand from abroad. Before the World War, the United States was a debtor nation; that is, it owed large sums of money to the rest of the world—money which it had borrowed to build its railroads and factories and mills. It could pay interest on these debts, and even pay off the principal of the debts, by shipping its agricultural products abroad. Many times in our history, it has been the sharpening of this foreign demand that has lifted the country from severe depressions.

How present situation differs from past

No such favorable conditions are to be found in the present agricultural problem. In the first place, the United States is no longer a debtor nation; rather it is a creditor nation. The rest of the world owes it billions of dollars, most of which was borrowed during and immediately following the World War. Consequently, we cannot ship wheat and corn and cotton abroad to pay off our debts to foreigners. The reverse is the case. They must ship to us more goods than they buy from us in order to pay off their debts. And this we have prevented them from doing by erecting impassable tariff walls. Moreover, the foreigners are themselves supplying more of their own needs, or they are buying from the countries which can produce more cheaply.

Thus, the farm problem confronting the United States today differs essentially from the farm problem that has faced previous generations. A solution of the problem through foreign outlets does not appear to be a possibility for the near future at least. What, then, is to happen to American agriculture? Are the American farmers to continue in the path they have followed during the last decade and a half, or is there some other way out? The Roosevelt administration has given a temporary answer in its farm-relief program. It has told the farmers to produce only as much as the American people can buy. In order to bring production and the domestic demand into balance, thousands of acres of farm land are today lying fallow.

MUST we continue to meet the farm problem by curbing production? Is the present program likely to result in the greatest degree of material well-being to the American people? These are questions which we as a nation must eventually answer. The real crux of the farm problem lies in another question: Are the American people getting all they need to eat and wear? Until a condition exists under which at least the minimum food and clothing requirements of the nation are being taken care of, we cannot be said to have a surplus of the very products which supply these requirements. In its fundamental nature, the farm problem does not differ from our whole economic problem. Can we find a way to distribute to the people the agricultural as well as the industrial products which our present-day economy is capable of giving us?

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Glimpses of the Past

Ten Years Ago This Week

Both Russia and Mexico have declined to attend the coming international conference on controlling the traffic in arms. The Soviets are not interested in a conference which they say is dominated by capitalistic influence, while Mexico still feels resentful because she was not invited to be an original member of the League of Nations.

Tsuneo Matsudaira, Japanese ambassador to the United States, believes there is no ground for the talk of war between his country and ours. Such a war, he says, "is a matter of physical impossibility. . . . We are destined to live in peace for all time."

Henry Ford has announced his intention of manufacturing "flying flivvers." The airplane branch of the Ford plant will be chiefly under the control of Edsel Ford, who appears eager to make as great a mark for himself in aviation as his father did in the auto industry.

Former Chancellor Marx, Centre party candidate for the German presidency, told a Berlin audience that he strongly favored the annexation of Austria.

John Singer Sargent, American member of the British Royal Academy, died suddenly this week. Mr. Sargent, who is generally regarded as the greatest portrait painter of the age, had the distinction of having his work exhibited at the British National Gallery, which is usually reserved for the great artists of the past.

The Delaware legislature has just voted overwhelmingly against abolishing the whipping post in that state. The Delaware lawmakers insist that this form of punishment deters criminals, although the practice has been abandoned in all the other 47 states.

Miss Lucille Atcherson, of Ohio, has the distinction of being the first American woman to be offered a diplomatic post. President Coolidge has just appointed her to the position of third secretary of the American legation in Switzerland.

Harry F. Sinclair, head of the Sinclair Consolidated Oil Corporation, says there is nothing in the charges that government officials were bribed to lease valuable government lands to the oil interests, including his own company. He says that the evidence of corruption found by the congressional investigation committee is "flimsy," and he predicts that the Teapot Dome leases will be upheld by the higher courts.